With charitable bill (O bill, sore-shaming Those rich-left heirs, that let their fathers lie Without a monument!) bring thee all this; Yea, and furr'd moss besides, when flowers are none, To winter-ground thy corse[5],

5 — the ruddock would,
With charitable bill, bring thee all this ;
Yea, and furr'd moss besides, when flowers are none,
To WINTER-GROUND thy corse.] Here again, the metaphor is strangely mangled. What sense is there in *whiter-grounding* a corse with *moss ?* A corse might indeed be said to be *winter-grounded* in good thick clay. But the epithet *furr'd* to *moss* directs us plainly to another reading:

" To winter-gmutt thy corse :"

i. e. thy summer habit shall be a light *gown 'offlotcers,* thy winter habit a good *warmfarr'dgo'wn* of *moss.* WARBURTON.

I have no doubt but that the rejected word was Shakspeare's, since the protection of the dead, and not their ornament, was what he meant to express. To *winter-ground* a plant, is to protect it from the inclemency of the winter-season, by straw, dung, &c. laid over it. This precaution is commonly taken in respect of tender trees or flowers, such as Arviragus, who loved Fidele^ represents her to be.

The *ruddock* is the *red-breast,* and is so called by Chaucer and Spenser:

" The tame *ruddock,* and the coward kite."

The office of covering the dead is likewise ascribed to the *ruddock^* by Drayton in his poem called The Owl:

" Covering with moss the dead's unclosed eye, " The little *red-breast* teacheth charitie." See also, Lupton's Thousand Notable Things, b. i. p. 10.

STEEVENS.

"------the *ruddock* would," &c. Is this an allusion to the " Babes of the Wood," or was the notion of the red-breast covering dead bodies, general before the writing that ballad? PERCY.

In Cornucopia, or divers Secrets wherein is contained the rare Secrets in Man, Beasts, Foules, Fishes, Trees, Plantes, Stones, antt such like most pleasant and profitable, and not before com-nutted to bee printed in English. Newlie drawen out of divers Latine Authors into English, by Thomas Johnson, 4to. 1596, signat. E. it is said: " The robin redbrest if he find a man or woman dead, will cover all his face with mosse, and some thinke that if the body should remaine unburied that he would cover the whole body also." REED.